

NATIONAL RURAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

**Breathing new life into
the countryside**

Can rural planning be the
solution and not the problem?

Thursday 9th October 2025

The British Motor Museum
Gaydon | Warwick

SPONSORED BY **THRINGS**
SOLICITORS



CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

SPONSORED BY **THRINGS**
SOLICITORS

TIME	DETAILS	SPEAKER
8.45	Registration	
9.15	Welcome Address	Barry Davies FBIAC Davies & Co. Chartered Surveyors

SESSION 1: RURAL PLANNING REALITY CHECK

Session Chairperson: David Glasson, DGP Limited

9.20	The Government's overhaul/ changes in the Planning system - a Panacea for growth or not?	TBC
9.50	Sarah Beeny in conversation with Tony Kernon, Kernon Countryside Consultants	Sarah Beeny Tony Kernon, Kernon Countryside Consultants
10.20	Questions	
10.45	Break	

SESSION 2: DEVELOPMENT MEETS TURBO-CHARGED NATURE

Session Chairperson: Fred Quartermain, Thrings LLP

11.15	Planning and Nature in flux - policy and possibilities	Paul Smith MRTPI MRICK, Managing Director, The Strategic Land Group
11.45	BNG in context - the roll-out in a challenging environment	Adam Sheppard, Assistant Professor of Urban Planning, University of Birmingham
12.15	Grey Belt to Green Energy: Planning Case Law in Focus	Ros Trotman, Partner, Planning & Environment Head of Development of Land, Thrings LLP

12.45

Questions

13.00

Lunch & optional viewing of the museum

SESSION 3: FARMING AND DIVERSIFICATION SIDE BY SIDE

14.00 Tom Homfray, Owner and Managing Partner, Penllyn Estate and Forage Farm Shop & Kitchen speaking from experience in conversation with Alex Madden, Partner, Hugh James

SESSION 4: BUCKLE UP....A LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Session Chairperson: Sara Tucker, North & Letherby Ltd

14.30	It's time to level up - Levelling-up, Regeneration Act and enforcement	Ben Du Feu, Barrister, Cornerstone Barristers
15.00	Farming, Taxation & Planning	George Badger, Partner Oxford, Ceres Rural
15.30	Engaging with rural communities: what can you do upfront?	Paul Miner MA MRTPI FRGS, Head of Policy, CPRE
16.00	Questions	
16.15	Closing Address	Sam Franklin, Landscape Land and Property Ltd
16.30	Conference Close	

GUEST SPEAKER Sarah Beeny



Sarah Beeny is a renowned broadcaster and property expert best known for hosting Channel 4's Property Ladder, Double Your House for Half the Money, and Help! My House is Falling Down.

Her TV career combines practical property advice with a passion for rural planning and sustainable living, showcased in Sarah Beeny's New Life in the Country, which follows her family's restoration of a 220-acre Somerset farm.

Dedicated to preserving heritage and promoting biodiversity, Sarah has become a leading voice in combining development with environmental responsibility.

ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS



GEORGE BADGER
Farming Consultant

George is a farming consultant and agronomist who specialises in giving practical and management advice to farming businesses.

From a farming background, George joined the industry in 2013, having achieved a first-class degree in Natural Sciences from Durham University.

George recently led the Defra Future Farming Resilience Fund project for Ceres Rural, helping 1500 businesses access independent advice on the direction to take as agricultural subsidies are withdrawn. George has a strong interest in Greenhouse gas emissions calculations, financial benchmarking and environmental sustainability work.

George is a member of the Farming & Business Committee and a written board examiner for the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers. His work has recently expanded to include advising various film and television production companies on farming matters.

George enjoys running, tennis and spending time on the family farm with his wife and three daughters.



BEN DU FEU
Planning Junior

Ben is ranked as a leading junior for planning in Legal 500 and Chambers and Partners and as one of the top-rated planning juniors by Planning Magazine.

He has a busy planning practice acting in respect of a wide range of planning and highways matters including residential, retail, infrastructure schemes, enforcement work and plan making.



BARRY DAVIES
Chartered Surveyor

Barry Davies BSc (Agric), MRICS, FAAV, Chartered Surveyor specialising in Rural Planning and Business Rates advice.



SAM FRANKLIN
Chartered Surveyor

Sam graduated with BSc (Hons) and completed his studies to qualify as a Chartered Surveyor with RICS and as a Fellow of the Association of Agricultural Valuers went on to take an MSc at Cranfield University.

Sam is also an Agricultural Consultant (FBIAC), Environmental Consultant (PIEMA) and a Professional Soil Scientist (MISoilSci). Sam started Landscape in 2001, the practice has since grown based on its strong track record of success in planning consultancy with expertise in agricultural land classification.



TOM HOMFRAY
Managing Partner at Penllyn Estate

Tom Homfray has been the Managing Partner at Penllyn Estate in the Vale of Glamorgan. The 2,000 acre estate has been within the family's ownership

for 200 years, and the nature of the business has changed hugely over the last two decades. A large beef farm until 2005, it is now a heavily diversified operation, with a thriving farm shop and restaurant, 40 commercial tenants, overnight accommodation and renewables all part of the enterprise mix. Tom worked in advertising, and then spent a decade as a City lawyer, before succeeding his father in 2020. Of planning issues, Tom notes "our business is so heavily diversified, with so many different uses and building requirements, that we always have 3 or 4 planning applications, or live issues, in play at any one time."



TONY KERNON
Former BIAC Chairman

Tony was BIAC's Chairman for 2020 – 2022. He has specialised in agricultural and equestrian dwellings, buildings, all manner of rural planning work, and inputs to environmental assessments for 35 years.

His work takes him across most of England and Wales and he acts for many local planning authorities as well as applicants.



ALEX MADDEN
Planning and environmental
law specialist

Alex Madden is a planning and environmental law specialist with over 20 years' experience. A Solicitor-Advocate with higher rights of audience in the Civil Courts, he is also a Legal Associate of the RTPI and a Fellow of BIAC.

Alex advises on all aspects of planning law, including development, enforcement, infrastructure agreements, EIA regulations, biodiversity, and permitted development rights. He regularly appears in planning appeals, High Court challenges, and judicial reviews. A frequent speaker at national conferences, Alex is a member of UKELA and the CLA South East Wales committee. He joined Hugh James as a Partner in 2024.



PAUL MINER
Head of Policy, CPRE

Paul has worked for CPRE, the countryside charity, since 2002 and in April 2022 became Head of Policy. This follows a long period of experience with national and strategic land-use planning from an environmental perspective.

Paul co-authored the reports Green Belts: a greener future jointly with Natural England in January 2010, and From Wasted Space to Living Spaces with the University of the West of England (UWE) in November 2014.

Paul also steered the production of the January 2020 Housing Design Audit for England, a major study of the quality of large new build housing estates,

produced jointly with the Bartlett School of Planning at University College London (UCL) and Place Alliance.

Paul served as Deputy Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link from 2015 to 2018 and as Chair of Trustees at The Woodfield Project from 2022 to 2025, a dynamic community organisation operating from a refurbished pavilion in south west London.

Paul has a BA in Politics from the University of Nottingham, and an MA in Town & Country Planning from UWE. Paul became a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute in 2008 and Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society in 2010.

Paul has a long track record of experience as a media spokesperson for CPRE and has been interviewed on the BBC One O'Clock television news, Radio 4 Today and Farming Today, and has frequently been quoted in both the established national media and built environment specialist media.

In his spare time he cooks, writes poetry and sings in the London Welsh Male Voice Choir.



ADAM SHEPPARD
University of Birmingham

Adam has worked in development management planning practice in both the rural and urban contexts, and has experience across the planning spectrum of Green Belt areas and open countryside to inner city redevelopment projects.

Adam now researches and teaches at the University of Birmingham in matters particularly relating to development management, planning and design, planning implementation, history, regulation and the decision-making process, and planning education. Adam is Course Director of the L7 Chartered Town Planner Apprenticeship, and heads outreach activities for his School and the RTPI South West Region. Adam is a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.



PAUL SMITH
Chartered Surveyor

Paul is a chartered town planner and chartered surveyor with more than 20 years' experience within the planning and housebuilding industries, having held senior roles at a PLC housebuilder and a national planning consultancy. He is currently the MD of The Strategic Land Group, one of the UK's most successful land promoters.

He is also a Director of industry body the Land, Planning and Development Federation; a member of the advisory board of Priced Out, Britain's largest campaign for affordable house prices; and writes a monthly column for Housing Today. He has also contributed to the work of a number of think tanks, and has advised government on reforming the planning system.



ROS TROTMAN
Thrings Solicitors

Ros is the Head of Development of Land and a Partner in the Planning and Environment team at Thrings Solicitors, who advises on planning matters arising through each stage of development projects.

With a career that has spanned both private practice and local government, Ros has established herself as a go-to figure in planning and environment across the South West and South East, acting for a range of clients - including landowners, developers and local planning authorities. Working closely with Thrings' award-winning Agriculture team, Ros has supported farming and landed estates clients to deliver successful diversification and development projects.

She has also been recognised by both of the legal sector's most prestigious directories - The Legal 500 and Chambers & Partners - with places in both rankings.

ABOUT OUR CHAIRPEOPLE



DAVID GLASSON
Director of DG Planning

David is Director of DG Planning which is a planning and development consultancy based in Cornwall specialising in the planning needs of agriculture, diversification and rural business.

David is a chartered town planner with over thirty years experience of town and country planning in the public and private sectors.

David and his wife Nicola set up the practice in 2007 and advise clients throughout South West England and South Wales. David previously held senior positions in local government, planning consultancy, the National Farmers' Union and a short period working on national planning guidance.

As a member of the London Food Board David advised then Mayor of London Ken Livingstone on a food strategy for the capital in 2005 to ensure all Londoners have easy access to healthy and affordable food. David has extensive knowledge of development in the countryside including the Green Belt, AONBs and National Parks and handled the planning application for an innovative "on farm" classroom project in Somerset giving children a "field to fork" experience of farming, cooking and healthy eating for which the practice was nominated a finalist in the 2018 RTPI Awards for Excellence.



THRINGS
ASSOCIATES

FRED QUARTERMAIN
Thrings' Planning team

Fred is a Partner who leads Thrings' Planning team, with a practice that closely links with the firms Development of Land and Agriculture teams. He has a wealth of specialist knowledge in both areas, allowing him to offer clients advice on a wide range of subjects including legislative compliance, environmental law, compulsory purchase, Heritage and planning matters. In his work with the Development of Land team, Fred advises on both contentious and non-contentious planning matters relating to residential,

mixed use and commercial development schemes. Fred provides strategic advice and guidance on navigating the planning system. He regularly advises clients on negotiation of Section 106 Agreements, Highways and Utilities Agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy and planning due diligence in property transactions. Alongside the Agriculture team, Fred works on both contentious and non-contentious agricultural planning matters. He handles cases across the Agriculture sector, including those regarding diversification, enabling development, making sure clients remain compliant with local and national policy, legislation and all aspects of planning and environmental law.

Fred has built a strong reputation for his ability to effectively liaise between clients, landowners, technical professionals, and Local Authority Officers. He helps a varied base of clients with everything from enabling strategic land development to advising on all aspects of planning and environmental law.



SARA TUCKER
Chartered Surveyor

Sara is a chartered surveyor at North & Letherby, a South Gloucestershire-based practice covering all aspects of rural property.

Sara specialises in rural planning matters, working with farmers and landowners across southern England and Wales. She has extensive experience in preparing and managing planning applications and applications for prior approval for a wide variety of rural development projects including building conversions, rural workers' dwellings, new farm buildings, equestrian development, other changes of use and rural diversification projects. Sara also assists clients with applications for Lawful Development Certificates and rural planning Enforcement issues.

NATIONAL RURAL PLANNING CONFERENCE

THURSDAY 9TH OCTOBER 2025

BOOK ONLINE

Via the BIAC website at - <http://www.biac.co.uk/events>

BOOK VIA EMAIL

Forward your booking form to events@biac.co.uk with confirmation of BACS payment to:
BIAC Account Number 90192473 | Sort Code 20 01 09 using Reference 'NRPC2025'

BOOKINGS CLOSE ON TUESDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025

BOOKING FORM

CONTACT NAME

COMPANY

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE

EMAIL

NAMES OF ATTENDEES

EMAIL

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

CONFERENCE PRICES

BIAC MEMBER

☐

£180.00 (incl VAT)

ORGANISATIONS

☐

£210 (incl VAT)

NON-BIAC MEMBER

☐

£228 (incl VAT)

STUDENTS

☐

£66 (incl VAT)

If you require a VAT invoice please retain a copy of this form for your records
VAT Registration Number GB 650 6050 66 (VAT charged at 20%)

TOTAL